

Remarks

The forgoing amendment has been made after a careful review of the present application, the references of records, and the Office Action dated October 19, 2005. In the Office Action, the examiner raised several objections to the drawings and then raised some minor objections to the specification. The claims were rejected under 35 USC 112 for being indefinite because of a number of minor inconsistencies. Claims 1 through 4 were rejected under 35 USC 102 (b) as being anticipated by Heiman and claims 5 and 6 were rejected under 35 USC 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Heiman in view of Levasseur.

In the forgoing amendment, the applicant has made several amendments to the specification that the applicant believes makes the specification consistent with the drawings. Specifically, the applicant has amended the brief description of Fig. 6 to recite that it shows "a single gear motor that is representative of all of the gear motors." Also, the bottom paragraph of page 5 has been amended to clarify that "the first contacts of motors 24d, 24e, 24f are not marked" with indicia numbers on Fig. 5 but they are in the same relative location as the first contacts marked in motors 24a, 24b, 24c. Also on page 6, the third paragraph has been amended to clarify that first contact 34 of gear motors 24a and 24d are connected in parallel by common connector line 54.

With the forgoing amendments to the text, the applicant hereby traverses the objections to the drawings set forth in paragraph 1 of the Office Action. In objecting to the drawings, the examiner states that the drawings fail to show "34 on (24D-F) as described on page 6 third paragraph." As stated above, the third paragraph is amended to recite that the indicia numbers 34 are not shown for motors 24d, 24e, 24f, but that the

first contacts of these motors are in the same relative location as those marked for the motors 24a, 24b, 24c. With the addition of this language, it is believed that this objection is overcome. Next, the examiner states that the drawings fail to show that 54 is connected to all contacts 34. The actual language from the specification is that "the first contact 34 of motors 24a and 24b are connected in parallel by common connector line 54." In fact, as shown by the drawings, common connector line 34 connects gear motors 24a and 24d, and not 24b. This is a typographical error on page 6 of the specification that is corrected as part of the forgoing amendment. A careful study of Fig. 5 will show that common connector line 54 connects the first contacts of gear motors 24a and 24d to switch 60 and not to "all the contacts 34" as the examiner as stated. Accordingly, this objection has been overcome. Similarly, the third paragraph of page 6 also refers to line 56 and states that "the first contacts 34 of gear motors 24b and 24e are connected in parallel by common connector line 56." Again, a careful inspection of Fig. 5 will show that line 56 connects the first contacts of both motors 24b and 24e to switch 62 such that the first contacts of those motors are in parallel as stated. The examiner did not object to a similar statement being made with respect to common connector line 58 which connects the first contacts of gear motors 24c and 24f to switch 64, but that line in similar fashion connects only the first contacts of these two gear motors in parallel as stated. Accordingly, it is believed that the forgoing examiner's objection is not well founded and should be withdrawn.

The examiner also objected to the drawings because the indicia number 40 has been used to designate both a second pole and a second connector. To overcome this objection, the applicant has amended the specification to make use of the word

“contacts” with respect to indicia number 40 throughout. A similar inconsistency was found with respect to contact 38, and that inconsistency has likewise been corrected.

The examiner also objected to the specification as reciting with respect to the switches that they have both a “first contact” and a “first connector.” This inconsistency in the specification has also been overcome by the amendment.

The examiner also rejected the claims under 35 USC 112 as having certain inconsistencies, namely that certain terms do not have proper antecedent basis. The applicant has amended the claims to overcome these objections and it is believed that all rejections under 35 USC 112 have been overcome and that can now be withdrawn.

The independent claims of the present application, numbered 1, 3, and 5 have all been amended to recite that the second contact of the switches of the first row are connected in parallel and connected to the detector, or the means for detecting a change in electric potential “without being connected to a contact of a motor.” With these amendments, the applicant now traverses the rejection of claims 1 through 4 under 35 USC 102 as being anticipated by Heiman. The Heiman reference discloses a vending machine that includes a diagnostic apparatus that detects changes in the impedance of the circuit. The circuit includes certain resistors which are switched in line by the switch on a gear motor such that the impedance is changed when the resistor on one of the gear motors is engaged by the switch on the gear motor. The device further involved a switching circuit bearing indicia number S3 in the drawings which switches the device between an operating or power circuit and a diagnostic circuit. The device periodically switches between the power circuit and the diagnostic circuit and monitors the impedance only when the diagnostic circuit is engaged. The circuit of the present

invention, on the other hand, continuously monitors the circuit to determine a change in potential. This structural difference has been clarified in claims 1 and 3 by the amendment in which it is recited that the second contacts are connected in parallel and connected to means for detecting a change in potential "without being connected to a contact of a motor," as is in the case of the Heiman circuit. Accordingly, the ground for the rejection of claims 1 to 4 has been overcome and the rejection under 35 USC 102 (b) must be withdrawn.

In similar fashion, the applicant also traverses the rejection of amended claims 5 and 6 under 35 USC 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Heiman in view of Levasseur. The Levasseur discloses a multiplexed system for controlling gear motors of a vending machine. The Levasseur reference, however, cannot be combined with Heiman to show a structure in which the second contact of the switches of the gear motor are in contact with the means for detecting a change of potential without being connected to a contact of the motor as required by amended claim 5. Accordingly, the applicant submits that amended claim 5 defines over the combination of Heiman and Levasseur, and the rejection based thereon must be withdrawn.

In view of the forgoing, it is believed that the claims of the application now define over the references of record and favorable reconsideration and allowance is requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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